

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

DECEMBER 1957

VOL. 39 No. 694

	PAGE
TOWARDS ACCURATE PREDICTIONS FROM ESP DATA BY G. W. FISK AND D. J. WEST .	157
ESP EXPERIMENTS WITH PSYCHOTICS BY G. ZORAB	162
THÉRÈSE NEUMANN BY DR L. FAIRFIELD .	164
CORRESPONDENCE	
ON THE 'FIELD-THEORETICAL' APPROACH TO PARAPSYCHOLOGY (C. T. K. CHARI); QUESTION ON 'THE LOGICAL AND SCIEN- TIFIC IMPLICATIONS OF PRECOGNITION' (S. H. FINLAY).	173
REVIEWS	179
OBITUARY: MRS CHARLES COOMBE TENNANT	179
THE LIBRARY	180

Price 3s. 6d.

THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH
1 ADAM & EVE MEWS · LONDON · W8

The purpose of the Society for Psychical Research, which was founded in 1882, is to examine without prejudice or prepossession and in a scientific spirit those faculties of man, real or supposed, which appear to be inexplicable on any generally recognized hypothesis. The Society does not hold or express corporate views. Any opinions expressed in its publications are, therefore, those of the authors alone.

The Council desire that material printed in the Society's publications shall be put to the fullest possible use by students of psychical research. Permission to reproduce or translate material published in this *Journal* must, however, first be obtained from the Society and from the author. Applications should be addressed to the Editor in the first instance.

It is requested that contributions or letters submitted for publication shall be typewritten in double spacing or written clearly on one side of the paper only, with a left-hand margin of at least one and a half inches and a space of at least one inch at the bottom of each page.

The annual subscription to the *Journal* is 15s. For other details see outside back cover.

JOURNAL
of the
Society for Psychical Research
VOLUME 39 No. 694 DECEMBER 1957

TOWARDS ACCURATE PREDICTIONS
FROM ESP DATA

BY G. W. FISK AND D. J. WEST

(Being an interim report on a first experiment, part of a programme of research carried out under a grant from the Parapsychology Foundation.)

INTRODUCTION

IN some previously reported mass ESP experiments (1) we found that better scores than usual were obtained by taking the majority opinion of a large number of guessers who were all aiming at the same targets. Assuming the majority opinion of a group to be more reliable than the guesses of individual subjects, we thought it might be possible to make use of this principle to increase ESP efficiency. By arranging a group test and deciding in advance to count only those trials on which a substantial majority of the subjects made the same guess we hoped to produce an accurate forecast of at least some of the target cards.

THE PROCEDURE

Fourteen subjects took part in a distance test. They were selected because they had all shown evidence of ESP ability on previous occasions, and some of them had been mentioned in published reports. (See list in Table II.) The targets were a set of twelve clock-face cards, one of each number from 1 to 12. On each day of the experiment D. J. W. shuffled the cards, which were enclosed in opaque envelopes with letters on the outside for identification, and arranged them in a row on the mantelpiece of his room in Hampstead, London. The subjects, whose places of residence were widely separated, were sent dated forms on which to record

their impressions day by day. They were asked to try each day to divine the order of the row of twelve cards from left to right. They were told that the cards would be re-shuffled each day at approximately 9 a.m., and they were asked to remember that there was one of each of the twelve numbers. Sets of twelve clock cards were also sent to the subjects with the suggestion that they try to arrange the specimen cards in the same order as the targets, and then record the order on their forms. This advice was meant to prevent the distraction inherent in the mental effort of avoiding guessing the same number twice. Most of the subjects were also sent photographs of the twelve envelopes arranged in a row.

The target envelopes were made up by Mr Denys Parsons, an Hon. Secretary to the Society for Psychical Research. He kept a record of the contents which he did not reveal to D. J. W. or anyone else until after the experiment. The experiment therefore approximated to clairvoyant conditions.

The experiment continued for eleven weeks, from 2 September 1956 to 17 November 1956, the targets being set out by D. J. W. on six days a week with rests on Sundays. During the last seven weeks D. J. W. used the Denys Parsons envelopes only on alternate days. Every other day he shuffled a separate set of twelve clock cards, arranging them in a row as usual, but open and visible. The intention was to provide a control series under 'telepathy' conditions which would also give the experimenters some guide as to which subjects, if any, were scoring successfully. Had certain of the subjects shown themselves outstandingly successful in the control series, it might have been justified to give more weight to their guesses than to those of the other subjects when endeavouring to predict the contents of the closed target envelopes. But this eventuality did not arise. Some of the subjects took part only in the first few weeks of the experiment, so the control series does not apply to them. The experiment was planned to continue a little longer, but it was brought to an end on account of subjects dropping out.

Since the same set of target envelopes was used over and over again it was possible to detect any tendency for particular envelopes to engender particular guesses. The idea was to pick out those envelopes associated with a strong 'majority opinion' or preferred guess. The conditions of the test having been arranged so that there were equal numbers of each type of guess, any statistically significant excess of a particular guess in association with a particular envelope would be indicative of ESP. By considering only those envelopes associated with a substantial preference for a particular guess, we hoped to be able to make an unusually accur-

ate forecast of the contents of some of the envelopes. As so often happens in ESP research, the results did not turn out as we had expected.

RESULTS

Considering first the closed envelope targets ; Table I shows the frequency distribution of the twelve different calls in association with each of the twelve lettered envelopes. A χ^2 evaluation of this 12×12 table shows that the distribution of the calls is uneven to an extent that just achieves statistical significance.

TABLE I

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF GUESSES ON SEALED ENVELOPE TARGETS

Envelope:	GUESSES :												Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
E (1)	28	24	27	30	28	24	28	20	27	29	20	23	308
K (2)	18	24	27	22	43	20	27	21	30	26	24	26	308
F (3)	22	38	24	24	21	28	22	23	30	21	26	29	308
G (4)	28	21	23	17	26	44	35	25	14	21	26	28	308
B (5)	16	33	22	29	25	20	30	23	29	31	27	23	308
J (6)	32	21	16	27	27	29	20	37	19	28	30	22	308
I (7)	35	19	26	23	22	19	24	33	25	24	29	29	308
A (8)	24	29	34	28	23	26	26	24	28	23	17	26	308
H (9)	29	24	20	27	26	24	23	32	21	27	33	22	308
C (10)	16	25	33	19	23	30	21	29	30	26	26	30	308
L (11)	29	28	30	19	24	23	17	25	30	28	26	29	308
D (12)	31	22	26	43	19	23	35	16	25	24	23	21	308
* Totals :	306	308	308	308	307	310	308	308	308	308	307	308	3696

$$\chi^2 = 155.44 \text{ with } 121 \text{ degrees of freedom}$$

$$\chi = \sqrt{2\chi^2} - \sqrt{2n-1} = 2.1$$

* N.B. The column totals vary very slightly because on a few occasions subjects made the same guess more than once.

On inspection several substantial 'majority votes' appear. For instance, when envelope K was target, 5, the favourite guess was made 43 times compared with a chance expectation of 25.67. Moreover the next most frequent guess, which was 9, was made only 30 times.

On the basis of the figures in Table I, D. J. W. made the following forecasts and sent them to Mr Denys Parsons :

Envelope F contains card 2

„ D „ „ 4

„ K „ „ 5

„ G „ „ 6

Following as closely as possible the preference order of the guesses on each envelope, D. J. W. also hazarded guesses as to the

likely contents of the remainder. There was not one correspondence between the actual contents of the envelopes (which are given in brackets beside the letters in Table I) and D. J. W.'s forecasts.

This result appears surprising in view of the preferences on certain envelopes, preferences which in themselves suggest an ESP factor. But the probable explanation can be found by comparing the scores on the control series with the scores on the closed envelopes. (See Table II.)

TABLE II
COMPARISON OF SEALED TARGETS AND VISIBLE TARGETS

Name of Subject	SEALED TARGETS			VISIBLE TARGETS		
	No. of trials	Direct hit deviation from chance	Divergence score dev. from chance	No. of trials	Direct hit deviation from chance	Divergence score dev. from chance
B. Downie	384	-12	7	180	2	-27
M. Symonds	528	-3	12	240	-1	-34
B. Shackleton	264	2	19			
R. C.	492	6	18	252	-5	-77
C. Vasse	384	-8	3	84	-2	-16
M. Vasse	96	-2	0	84	-2	10
P. Langdon-Davies	120	0	0			
J. Langdon-Davies	84	1	14			
Maria I	132	-4	2			
E. Holloway	96	-3	17			
S. Badenoch	228	3	34	120	-4	-36
J. Badenoch	276	2	-52	144	0	0
G. W. Fisk	468	-4	-52	228	-3	-22
W. Cookson	144	3				
Totals :	3696	-19	26	1332	-11	-202

As the subjects were largely aiming at the same targets, the possibility of a 'stacking effect' makes it invalid to sum their scores. But in any case both the individual scores and the total deviation from chance expectation are evidently insignificant in the case of the closed targets. On the open or 'control' target series there is some suggestion of negative scoring on the assessment by the divergence scoring method which takes into account partial hits (2). This would mean that the subjects were consistently making guesses away from the actual target. However, even the largest of the individual divergence scores (R.C.'s. -77, which corresponds to 2.7 standard deviations) is not statistically significant in view of the fact that it is one of fourteen. But if any consistent trend that may have been present in the guessing was in

a negative direction, the failure of the 'majority votes' to correspond with the targets no longer appears surprising.

The results displayed in Table I suggest that the negative scoring tendency resulted from a systematic mis-calling of certain targets, calling 6 for 4, 5 for 2 and 4 for 12. The significant χ^2 figure for Table I as a whole was largely due to these three cells of the table. The question arises whether a similar pattern of mis-calling occurs in the control series using open targets. Unfortunately this question cannot be answered, since there were too few trials in the control series to make a 12×12 breakdown and a χ^2 evaluation possible. But in Table III such an analysis has been made for the whole experiment, taking both closed and open targets together.

TABLE III

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF GUESSES ON SEALED ENVELOPE AND OPEN TARGETS COMBINED

Targets	GUESSES											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	38	31	36	42	35	33	37	30	42	39	27	29
2	25	33	30	34	52	36	39	28	44	32	29	37
3	33	47	32	31	24	43	35	31	35	34	37	37
4	38	31	34	24	33	51	45	33	22	28	38	42
5	26	41	34	37	31	27	38	33	39	41	38	34
6	49	28	29	34	36	36	27	50	24	37	45	24
7	42	26	37	33	31	29	27	42	40	30	39	43
8	32	44	41	41	32	36	36	34	32	33	28	28
9	36	39	34	37	36	29	29	40	30	37	42	30
10	26	40	37	24	38	37	28	43	34	34	33	45
11	33	31	38	30	44	32	30	29	41	41	35	35
12	39	28	28	52	26	31	48	26	36	32	28	35

$$\chi^2 = 164 \text{ with } 121 \text{ d.f.}$$

$$t = 2.6. \quad P = < 0.01$$

The χ^2 from Table III gives a more comfortably significant result, confirming the existence over the experiment as a whole of a non-random association between targets and calls, and providing evidence that the subjects were manifesting (misguided) ESP.

DISCUSSION

The results of this preliminary experiment were not without promise, for the association of particular guesses with particular targets—even though they were the wrong targets—showed that something was happening. One possible explanation of the observation is that the results were due to cross influence of one subject

on another. In any group ESP experiment we have no means of insuring that subjects will necessarily be influenced solely by the targets provided by the experimenter and/or his agent. There is the possibility that one or more of the subjects themselves, in recording their own guesses, may be acting as agents and influencing the other subjects' guesses. And if these secondary agents' guesses tend not to correspond with the target, their errors will be repeated again and again by other subjects, resulting in a consensus of incorrect guesses by the whole group and the appearance of 'misguided' ESP.

Whether or no this is a correct explanation, it is clear that for the purpose of obtaining unusually accurate forecasts of the contents of a series of sealed envelopes our approach must be modified. D. J. W. probably made a tactical mistake in himself acting as the person in charge of the targets, since some previous work suggests that the general run of subjects do not score so well when he acts as agent (3), (4). Furthermore, if subjects display contrary trends of scoring according to mood or attitude, as has also been suggested by our own previous results (1) as well as those of other workers, then some device must be found to sort out the positive scorers. By alternating sealed targets with open cards as controls, the efficacy of various methods of identifying the positive scorers could be tried out before making the final forecast and opening the sealed targets. Further experiments, in order to have the best chance of success, should be on a larger scale than this first pilot investigation.

REFERENCES

- (1) Fisk, G. W. and West, D. J., 'ESP and Mood,' *Journ. S.P.R.*, 1956, 38, 320-329.
- (2) Fisk, G. W. and Mitchell, A. M. J., 'ESP Experiments with Clock Cards,' *Journ. S.P.R.*, 1953, 37, 1-14.
- (3) West, D. J. and Fisk, G. W., 'A Dual ESP Experiment with Clock Cards,' *Journ. S.P.R.*, 1953, 37, 185-197.
- (4) Michie, D. and West, D. J., 'A Mass ESP Test Using Television,' *Journ. S.P.R.*, 1957, 39, 113-133.

ESP EXPERIMENTS WITH PSYCHOTICS

BY G. ZORAB

DURING the autumn of 1955 I obtained facilities to start a series of ESP experiments in a large psychiatric clinic, situated in one of the southern counties of the Netherlands.¹

¹ This research was carried out under a grant from Parapsychology Foundation. The author gratefully acknowledges the help proffered by Mrs Eileen J. Garrett.

After due consideration of the special conditions that would have to be met while experimenting with psychotic subjects, it was finally decided to adopt the B.T. technique of card guessing, in which each card is laid aside by the experimenter as it is called by the subject. The check-up is made at the end of the run. Experimenter and subject were to be separated by a screen identical to those in use at the Parapsychology Laboratory, Duke University (*vide* J. B. Rhine, *The Reach of the Mind*, N.Y., 1947, 102). For the testing of the first few subjects the cards to be called were prepared according to a list of random numbers supplied by the Dutch Institute of Statistics. Later on, when nothing but chance results were obtained the tedious process of arranging the cards in a random sequence became too much for the hard-pressed experimenters (most of them belonged to the psychological staff of the clinic), so that it was decided to continue by shuffling the packs and giving them each seven dove-tail shufflings.

Some patients were very easy to work with, conscientiously noting down their guesses during the time the experiment lasted; with others serious difficulties had to be overcome in order to keep them to their tasks.

In all, 16 subjects were tested, 15 of whom each did 16 runs through the deck. One (Mr A.), however, by mistake did 200 runs, the conditions remaining the same. In the case of Mr A. the guessing went on during 10 runs without interruption, i.e. 10 decks were called successively in one block.

ALL-OVER RESULTS OF ALL SUBJECTS (A. TO P.) TESTED

	Number of trials	Hits	Deviation	SD	CR
o-card	11000	2157	-43	42	1
- 1 card	10740	2064	-84	41	2.05
+ 1 card	10740	2092	-56	41	1.36

The above table makes it quite clear that no result of the least significance was obtained.

The subjects tested can be grouped into (1) *schizophrenics*, (2) *maniacal-depressives*, and (3) *various mental disorders* (cases of psychopathic temperament, pseudologica phantastica, debility associated with periodically a dissociation of the personality, and psychopathological personality structure).

The results obtained by the 8 schizophrenics (one of these, Mr A. did 5,000 calls, while the other 7 each did 400 calls) were as follows:

GROUP I, SCHIZOPHRENICS

	Number of trials	Hits	Deviation	SD	CR
o-card	7800	1557	-3	36	0.1
-1 card	7668	1462	-71	34	2.1
+1 card	7668	1512	-21	34	0.6

Four maniacal-depressives were tested :

GROUP II, MANIACAL-DEPRESSIVES

	Number of trials	Hits	Deviation	SD	CR
o-card	1600	298	-22	16	1.4
-1 card	1536	300	-7	15.3	0.5
+1 card	1536	308	+1	15.3	0

Four of group III were tested :

GROUP III, VARIOUS MENTAL DISORDERS

	Number of trials	Hits	Deviation	SD	CR
o-card	1600	287	-33	16	2.05
-1 card	1536	302	-5	15.3	0.3
+1 card	1536	305	-2	15.3	0.1

Assessing the various deviations of the three groups of psychotics by the χ^2 test no indication of any significance was found for an influencing psi factor.

Neither was it found that subjects suffering from a specified psychosis scored higher than others whose syndrome was differently diagnosed.

THÉRÈSE NEUMANN

BY DR L. FAIRFIELD

It has long seemed to me very wrong that the record of the woman who presents more paranormal, or supposedly paranormal, phenomena than any other in the world today should never have been brought before a society engaged in psychical research. So rich and varied is the symptomatology she exhibits that I have been confronted with two serious difficulties, firstly of collecting the best evidence, as I have very little German, and secondly of selecting the salient facts which could be condensed into one

lecture. For the evidence I have gone wherever possible to an acknowledged supporter, e.g. Teodorowitz, Schimberg, Hynek. Of critical works, Miss Hilda Graef and Père Siwek, S.J. have given us scholarly and restrained examples. A discussion of the miraculisée's personal character has had to be omitted for lack of space and because it would inevitably have led to a charge of importing prejudice.

Thérèse Neumann was born in the remote Bavarian village of Konnersreuth on 8 April 1898, the eldest of ten children of a poor village tailor. She had the usual upbringing of a peasant child in a devout Catholic family and showed no remarkable characteristics either at home or at school. Although in no way pious, she was rigidly correct in her behaviour with the lively youth of the village, and had formed the intention of becoming a missionary. At fourteen she went into service with a well-to-do farmer, and during the 1914 war she was employed on very rough and heavy jobs, no doubt with none too much nourishment to sustain her. A climax came when on 10 March 1918 she was called on to assist her master in putting out a fire. After some hours of gruelling work she felt a sharp pain in the small of her back which doubled her up, and forced her to stop work. From that day onwards she has never had normal health nor been able to undertake regular employment.

On attempting to resume work after a few days, the girl proved quite unfit ; she stumbled about and at last fell down some cellar steps, striking the back of her head and being thereafter unconscious for some hours. A visit to a local hospital was not a success : the doctors put her on rest and light diet and, she thought, did not understand her case, so she took her discharge. It is of some importance that she admittedly ate secretly food brought in by friends.

I can only summarize the astonishing sequence of symptoms which appeared in the next few months. Headaches, incontinence of bowel and bladder, cough, amenorrhoea, inability to swallow, convulsions at the lightest touch, paralysis of the limbs, complete blindness, abscess of the ear and partial deafness. Contraction of the limbs and bedsores came later. By March 1920 the girl was in such a deplorable condition that application was made for an insurance scheme pension, and it is not surprising that four doctors certified her as totally incapacitated from 'very grave hysteria, blindness and partial paralysis'. It had proved impossible to examine her eyes as she fell into violent convulsions when an attempt was made. The amount of pension awarded and for how long it was drawn I cannot discover. She had, however, become a chronic invalid with multiple afflictions.

Cures

Until 1923 (i.e. five years after the onset of her illness) Thérèse did not show any mystic phenomena nor evidences of special interest in sanctity. She had, however, acquired an intense devotion to Thérèse of Lisieux, known as the 'Little Flower', whose *cultus* spread like forest fire during the First World War and the following years. On the day of this nun's beatification in April 1923, our Thérèse had a vision of the young saint and was miraculously cured of her blindness, though her other ailments remained. At this time she stopped taking all food, except the consecrated wafer—indeed, she claimed to be unable to swallow an unconsecrated one—and about this time she had many throat troubles. When the saint of Lisieux was canonized in 1925, a bright light appeared to Thérèse Neumann and she got up and walked. Three 'cures' of other symptoms followed in response to the touch of relics, but somehow she remained as suffering as ever. This is a significant fact, for it is a feature of a 'miraculous' cure as understood by the Church that it should be complete and leave the person in good health.

I have dwelt in detail on this early history of Thérèse because of its unmistakably hysterical nature, which may throw a considerable light on subsequent events more mysterious in origin.

This later phase, which has carried Thérèse Neumann's name all over the world, began in Lent 1926. One day in March Thérèse, still a chronic invalid, fell into an ecstasy or trance and awoke to announce that she had had a vision of Our Lord's agony in the Garden—and at the same time complained of a pain in her side accompanied by a flow of blood. During Easter she had further visions of the whole Passion and on the Good Friday the stigmata appeared on hands, feet and, very unusually, blood and pus oozed from her eyes. The parish priest, Father Naber, who had already taken a great interest in his remarkable parishioner, was called to witness these wonders. He immediately took them at face value and showed great excitement and, from that day to this, became her devoted adherent.

Let us now examine some of the extraordinary phenomena which have accumulated around Thérèse in the intervening thirty years. The ecstasies or trances which are the key to the whole picture take three well-defined forms.

(a) *The Ecstasy Proper*. This may come on suddenly at any time but mainly appears on Fridays, for a total of seven months in the year, according to an elaborate though obscure liturgical pattern. They last from Thursday at midnight to 1 or 2 a.m. on Friday. The percipient adopts a curious cataleptic pose, half

lying, half sitting, and is usually, but not always, impervious to outside impressions. She can respond to Father Naber and has been known to order two people she disliked out of the room—and resume her vision! The spectacle she presents as she lies moaning and muttering on her couch is said by many witnesses to be a ‘strange and most frightful’ one. I have selected some extracts from the work of a well-known Indian Yogi¹ who called on her with an American friend in 1935. ‘I entered her chamber, filled with visitors,’ says the Yogi, ‘she was lying in a white robe on the bed . . . a strange and most frightful spectacle. Blood flowed thinly and continuously in an inch-wide stream from Thérèse’s lower eyelids. . . . The cloth wrapped round her head was drenched in blood from the stigmata wounds of the Crown of Thorns. The white garment was redly splotched over her heart from the wound in the side. . . . Thérèse’s hands were extended in a gesture maternal, pleading: her face wore an expression both tortured and divine. . . . Murmuring words in a foreign tongue she spoke with slightly quivering lips to persons visible before her inner sight. . . . In the exhaustion of fervid pity, Thérèse sank heavily against her pillow. . . .’ (The American friend here falls in a faint and is carried out.)

Curiously enough, the wounds on hands and feet have not bled for many years, but they are said occasionally to swell up and turn a darker red during the ecstasies. Normally they are curious square superficial wounds covered by a thin pellicle, and very tender on pressure. When Dr Seidl applied a dressing with a bland ointment it caused such intolerable pain that it had to be removed. For long she walked with an odd hopping gait, owing to pain from the wounds in the feet.

During the first few years there would seem to have been a frequent need to urinate during the visions, for which purpose her mother brought her a bowl and spectators were asked to leave the room—but Thérèse is said to have passed no water for many years.

The content of Thérèse’s visions is as extraordinary as the form. She claims that the Passion of Our Lord unrolls itself in a series of thirty to fifty scenes—apparently something like a cinematograph. She hears the voices but cannot understand what is said. The visionary is herself in the picture, but it is not clear how far characters other than Our Lord can see her. ‘Her one idea is to rescue Christ,’ says her great admirer, Archbishop Teodorowitz. ‘She turned once to a priest near her bed and told him to tell the Saviour’s mother that “Resl” says they have set him free!’ She

¹ Paramhansa Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi* (New York, Philosophical Library, 1945), p. 366.

even speaks of Our Lord casting a 'grateful look on her from the Cross'. She threatens to slap the impenitent thief! No wonder that Father Siwek asks in bewilderment, 'Does she *understand* the drama of the Passion? Has she any clear idea of the tragedy of Golgotha?' The whole picture suggests a naïvely egotistical phantasy, such as we have all entertained in childhood, rather than a revelation natural or supernatural.

By a strange contortion of memory, no recollection of a vision is carried on to the next trance, though they are recalled in her other mental states, so the outcome is fresh every time.

Besides these Friday trances, Thérèse has had visions of many events in sacred history and in the lives of the saints, but they mostly follow popular legend and are of no particular interest.

(b) *The Second Trance State*. Known to Thérèse's circle as the 'State of Absorption or Prepossession', this appears a few minutes after the end of an ecstasy, and also sporadically at other times. Its duration is irregular but it may extend to several hours. The main characteristic is a regression to childishness, the mental powers are said to be those of a child of four, but that is misleading and does not correspond with any I.Q. estimate. The visionary answers questions freely; indeed, much of our information about the visions is derived from cross-examinations conducted at such times. She speaks with a broad Bavarian dialect, makes infantile comments on Bible incidents, is unable to count or to understand words like 'brother' and 'Pope', and retorts pertly to Our Lord.

(c) *The State of 'Exalted Repose'*. After a period of normal sleep comes the most remarkable phase of all. Thérèse lies rigid, but not only answers queries (speaking now in good High German and in a majestic voice), but takes an active interest in other people and their affairs. It is in this condition that the gifts of clairvoyance, of detecting false relics, of prophesy, and the reading of secret thoughts are alleged to manifest themselves. Certain it is that great numbers of people, high ecclesiastics, royalty, the famous in many professions, have thronged to consult her in the past thirty years. She speaks of herself in the third person as 'Res'l' and a voice which is presumably that of her Saviour (Heiland) advises her and even answers for her at times. On waking she has no recollection of what she has said in this state of 'exalted repose', but statements on this point are not wholly consistent.

One difficulty found in examining the trances and, indeed, all the phenomena associated with Thérèse Neumann, is that of ascertaining the facts, surprising in view of the considerable

volume of literature already associated with her. This peasant girl is not uneducated, she conducts correspondence, but she has never written down any of her experiences and we are dependent on reports of her visions made, sometimes after long questioning, by priests and friends, when in the 'infantile' state. One is struck by the fact that not the slightest effort is made to exclude suggestion. A further complication is introduced by the unusual attitude of Father Naber, the parish priest, who has acted as a friend and follower rather than a spiritual guide. He accepted her as a genuine miraculisée from the start, and promptly became the centre of a powerful group of priests and laymen known as the 'Konnersreuth Kreuz', who presented her case in high places, protected her from criticism and displayed such animus against enquirers that adequate investigation has always been impossible. Much of Thérèse's time is spent in his presbytery (where her sister is, or was, cook). Her visitors are interviewed by him. During the Friday visions he stands at her bedroom door and interprets her gestures in a manner which strikes many visitors as arbitrary and fantastic. None has found an ill word to say of this worthy old man (he is now over ninety), but he has possibly played a part in the story very different from what he imagines.

What is the nature of these trance states, of which only the barest outline can be given here? That of 'Exalted Repose' will be readily recognized, as it has been already by many psychologists and theologians, as a form of spiritual trance in which the subject passes under the control of a higher being who speaks through her. (It may be compared to the 'Red Indian Chief' phase, as compared with the 'Little Topsy' phase of control by a child spirit, here dubbed 'infantile pre-possession'.) This has been hotly contested by those concerned to defend Thérèse's orthodoxy, for such trances are the subject of explicit warnings by St Thérèse of Avila, St John of the Cross, and many other mystics, great and small. They are denounced roundly as traps laid for the contemplative soul by the Devil himself. 'The Church Fathers,' says Miss Graef, 'dealing with this phenomenon, did not regard it as a protection of the humility of the prophet but, on the contrary, as a sign of the spuriousness of her experiences.' Far from being a sign of grace or mystical unity with the Godhead, these trances are held to be evidence of a disintegrated personality, a thing always condemned by the Church. Only a *whole* personality, one may well believe, is a worthy offering to the Almighty. Moreover, where the mind is split or disassociated, and certain areas normally in control are blocked out, the moral responsibility of the individual cannot be fully maintained. The 'unconscious' is in control, and the risk of

ideas coming from some split portion of the mind being mistaken for divine messages is obviously very great. The fact that messages apparently purport to come from Christ speaking through Thérèse links her with the pythonesses of antiquity rather than with the saints of Christianity.

On the nature of the visions a whole lecture could be delivered—I have only space for a brief comment. They claim to be a series of pilgrimages back into the past, but they do not accord with historical accounts of the Passion and it is remarkable that the pilgrimage should be indefinitely repeated. One understands that no modern theory of time, or of cerebral mechanism, would account for such happenings—if Thérèse really does periodically visit Jerusalem in the first year of the Christian era and it is a miracle. Technically, the whole episode sounds more like a recurrent visual hallucination. It also suggests some of the egotistical phantasies of participation in historical events in which many of us have indulged in childhood and adolescence. That the visionary is of a strongly hysterical disposition and gifted with great powers of visualization explains, to some critics, the dramatic setting.

It has already been mentioned that Thérèse is credited with many remarkable paranormal gifts, such as bilocating, hierognases, prophesying disasters (or simply the arrival of visitors), of reading hidden thoughts or detecting hidden sins, and of understanding unknown tongues. Even if one had time, it would be impossible to discuss these episodes, for no book gives any single documented or even corroborated case. Many rest on the unsupported word of Father Naber. It is perfectly possible that Thérèse, who has obviously a highly hysterical make-up, may also possess the psi faculty and may well be sensitive to telepathic influences. One simply cannot tell on the evidence available and, even if she were, it would of course be no evidence of supernatural powers, and still less of sanctity.

Two exceptional phenomena demand, however, a longer discussion. First there are the famous *Suehenleiden* or 'expiatory sufferings', unique in the history of the Church. For many years it has been claimed that aches and pains afflicting the miraculisée are really ailments from which other persons are suffering, which she has been allowed to take over on their behalf. Quite frequently she lies in bed groaning and presently she (or Father Naber) will announce that she is suffering on behalf of some person unknown to her at the time but identified by him later. Such astounding claims naturally call for maximum proof but, again, one looks in vain for ordinary documentation. There is one well-

known story which has indeed been investigated, that early in the 'twenties Thérèse took on a serious throat trouble affecting a seminarist, and that it vanished when he said his first mass. I have pursued this story from book to book and must agree with Miss Graef that it has been completely disproved. Here is another pious anecdote from Schimberg (see also Teodorowitz, p. 442): 'It was observed that at carnival time in 1928 and 1930 she endured terrible hunger and unquenchable thirst in atonement for sins of drunkenness and gluttony. Vomiting spells of the severest kind came upon her and despite the fact that already then she took no liquid food whatsoever, she vomited forth a liquid that had an offensive stench of beer, wine and whiskey.'¹ And again, 'One afternoon her father called Father Naber because something out of the ordinary was happening. Resl lay on the sofa and acted in a way completely foreign to her character. She and the whole room reeked with the odour of alcohol. It was found that, at the time, someone in another town was suddenly freed from his addiction to alcoholic drink.'²

But even that is not the most extraordinary feature of this case. We have to deal with the prolonged fast. It is claimed that for 29 years Thérèse has eaten and drunk nothing whatever, and that for four years before that she only took a few drops of water with Holy Communion and a few spoonfuls of gruel. She is said to have no excretions, but that is not wholly true. Thérèse salivates and perspires normally, vomits on occasion, coughs up phlegm and, of course, sheds large quantities of blood.

Have these extraordinary allegations ever been subject to adequate test? In 1927 Thérèse and her parents were persuaded to allow a close watch to be kept over her in her own home for 14 days by four Franciscan nuns, all trained nurses working under medical supervision. She was never seen to eat or drink, but her weight fluctuated, and was the same (55 kilos) at the end as at the beginning. More amazing still, her urine showed the characteristics of a 'starvation urine' all the time she was under observation, and acetone was noted in her breath. But a few days after the nurses had been withdrawn, it became practically normal! The inference was obvious and, although no pronouncement was issued, strenuous efforts were made to persuade Thérèse to come into a hospital for full and controlled investigation.³ But Herr Neumann, speaking for himself and his daughter, has always absolutely opposed any

¹ A. P. Schimberg, *The Story of Thérèse Neumann*, p. 100.

² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

³ Full particulars are given by Père Siwek in *The Riddle of Konnersreuth*, p. 211.

further enquiry or admission to hospital. Finally, in 1937, the whole Bavarian episcopate issued a statement recounting the facts. 'In this state of affairs,' they say, 'the ecclesiastical authorities can take no responsibility for the reality of the alleged inedia and for the character of other extraordinary happenings at Konnersreuth. Until, therefore, matters have been cleared up by another investigation no more permits for visits to Thérèse Neumann are issued.'

A great deal of energy has been wasted on discussing whether this case is comparable with the nervous condition known as 'anorexia nervosa'—and for how long other mystics have managed to survive without food and drink. All this is beside the point for, if the facts alleged about Thérèse are true, we have a miracle. The metabolism of the human body can be slowed down, but not arrested altogether. Mystics and neurotics can live on extremely little, but not on nothing : if they attempt to do so they die. In the instances which would appear to prove the contrary, there has been opportunity for the clandestine taking of water and at least a modicum of nourishment. Thérèse lives surrounded by a devoted family, who own a farm, she moves freely about the village, and goes on visits to friends in other towns and on long excursions. On the other hand, the startling fact stands out that there is no record that anyone has seen her eat or drink in 29 years.

The higher Catholic authorities have, as I think we all would do, fixed on this inedia as the crux of the whole case. After the family refused to allow a controlled investigation, most of Thérèse Neumann's distinguished admirers (including Cardinal Faulhaber) withdrew their support. Her visitors and correspondents diminished in number. It is likely that this strange cult would have died out altogether but for the accident that after the war Konnersreuth was included in the American zone. Here was a marvel the United States could not produce! The G.I.s, and later many ecclesiastics from the States, flocked in their thousands, and Thérèse, now a stocky, garrulous, rather plump woman of nearly fifty years, was kept busy signing postcards and posing for snapshots. One ought to say that the Neumann family have steadily refused money, but not substantial gifts in kind (Thérèse has accepted a house in a neighbouring town) and they seem to enjoy a moderate prosperity. The parents are now dead and the trances and ecstasies are much less frequent, but the stigmata, the expiatory sufferings and the baffling fast continue. There seems no more prospect than before of an investigation which will establish the facts.

In view of the possibility of misunderstanding about the attitude of the Church, it may be well to state explicitly that the two

Bishops of Ratisbon or Regensburg, the diocese in which Thérèse resides, who have ruled during the events described, have been strongly critical and have discouraged her *cultus*. The attitude of the Bavarian Hierarchy we have already noted : they refuse to be further concerned. The medical advisers to the Congregation of Rites in France and Italy (Professors de l'Hermitte and Poray-Madjeski) have strongly opposed a supernatural interpretation of the phenomena. The Vatican has made no pronouncement at all.

CORRESPONDENCE

ON THE 'FIELD-THEORETICAL' APPROACH TO PARAPSYCHOLOGY

SIR,—The readers of this *Journal* who have followed the correspondence between Dr G. D. Wassermann and Dr Michael Scriven¹ may be interested in some observations of mine. I have recently (2) explored the very debatable territory which lies between quantum physics and parapsychology and discussed (3) the technical implications of Dr Wassermann's provisional sketch of his hypothesis. Let me say, at the outset, that it redounds very much to the credit of Dr Wassermann that he has marshalled so much knowledge of modern physics, biology and psychology in the interests of his 'field-theoretical' approach to psi. It would be presumptuous for anybody to anticipate *all* that he may have to say in his promised book. The issues, however, which Dr Scriven has raised, are not those about a few possible lacunae in Dr Wassermann's tentative statement of his theory ; they are about the *basic* approach unfolded. Opinions about epistemological issues must differ and the differences must be respected in a controversial domain like parapsychology. Not all can share Dr Wassermann's optimism about the future of 'Lorentz-invariant fields'. I shall indicate here my own reasons for distrusting his *fundamental* approach involving the use of familiar mathematical constructs like the Lagrangian and the Hamiltonian.

Is present-day quantum field theory interpretative *enough* to admit of far-reaching applications to biology and psychology? I doubt it. F. J. Dyson (4), one of the authorities on quantum field theory, has summed up the issues by saying that quantum physics, in its present stage of development, is by its very nature descriptive and not explanatory. It treats 'elementary particles' in much the same fashion that nineteenth-century chemistry treated its 'elements'. It does not explain *why* such and such particles exist, *why*

¹ This *Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 692 (June 1957), pp. 101-106.

they have the masses actually observed, *why* some of them interact strongly and others do not. 'Dyson adds that serious difficulties present themselves even when we try to fulfil the modest descriptive aims of present-day quantum field theory. For one thing, we do not have a complete list of 'elementary particles', even after the discovery of the 'heavy mesons' and the 'anti-proton'. One of the most promising features of quantum field theory is the way it lays the foundations for a mathematical treatment of the connexion between the 'spin' of a particle and statistics. A natural classification of 'elementary particles' seems possible and the number of mathematically available 'fields' seems to fit in admirably with what we know about 'elementary particles'. But the prospects, as Dr Wassermann admits, are much less bright when we turn to the interaction of 'fields'. In the 'self-energy problems' one meets again and again with the 'disease of the infinities' (2, 3). The 'cures' proposed are not more helpful than the 'diagnosis'. Tomonaga and Schwinger, by an ingenious method of 'renormalization', tried to 'subtract out' the 'infinities'; the theory led to some striking agreement with the delicate 'Lamb-Retherford shift'. But Dirac said of the theory: 'It is an ugly and incomplete one and cannot be considered a satisfying solution of the problem of the electron.' Max Born thinks (1, p. 132) that the theory 'circumvents, instead of attacking, the actual problem'. I have discussed elsewhere (2, 3) briefly the 'remedies' proposed by Yukawa, March, Born and Heisenberg. Heisenberg, in introducing his 'S-matrix', cast serious doubts on the usual descriptions of physical processes by a 'Hamiltonian function'; he challenged the assumption that 'probability' spreads in space and time according to laws which can be expressed in the customary differential and continuous form. The postulation of a 'quasi-discreteness' in space and time and the introduction of 'non-linear field theories' prescribe serious limits to 'field theory'. I have given reasons (3, esp. pp. 21-22) for thinking that Dr Wassermann's use of quantum-mechanical 'perturbation methods', 'transition probabilities' and 'conservation' laws is not at all free from difficulties. Hermann Weyl's acute remark (13) that the basic questions of quantum physics have not been clarified even to the extent to which issues about relativity have been cleared up is pertinent to the contemporary situation. In the *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* and elsewhere, Schrödinger has proposed to dispense with the assumption of 'particles' and express all the laws of physics in the language of 'wave fields'. Max Born, Whittaker and others, however, have demurred to the proposal. D. Bohm, De Broglie, Frenkel and Blokhintzev prefer to stick to the

'particle theory' with various concealed parameters or 'hidden variables' introduced into it. Reichenbach and others, however, have subjected the theories to drastic criticism. One is left with no clear and convincing picture of the epistemological background of quantum electro-dynamics. J. C. Slater (9), who contributed significantly to the mathematical treatment of complex molecules, has said that 'we are not as close to the answers as we might have been tempted to think a few years ago. . . . We are likely to have more and more generalizations of a *somewhat limited sort*'. (Italics mine.) R. E. Peierls (5, p. 274), an expert field theorist, maintains that 'from having a look of near completeness, basic physics has changed again to a field with more open questions than final answers'. Nobody knows (5, p. 269) whether the next step will be some 'ingenious mathematical discovery' or some 'clue derived from experiments which lead to the modification of the laws themselves'. Wentzel, Marshak, Margenau, E. H. Hutten and others have pointed out that quantum field theory is a 'finished discipline' only in the same sense as classical physics which left the nature of the electron an essentially unsolved problem.

Even if we grant that a quantum biology is, in principle, possible, we hardly know where to begin. The authorities on quantum physics are not agreed among themselves. Jordan's *Treffer theorie* assigns a crucial role to 'quantum indeterminacy' in the 'triggering' of biological events. Schrödinger is inclined to reject the possibility; he thinks that the statistical-determinism of biological events is not less important than the quantum-indeterminacy of micro-physical processes. He regards the biological gene as an 'aperiodic crystal' and ascribes to it a higher degree of order than to the 'periodic crystal'. Peierls (5, pp. 276-278) is of the opinion that the 'newer developments in physics are not likely to be of direct help to the biologist'; they are useful only in removing 'misconceptions due to the older mechanistic ideas' and in widening the 'possibilities open to the imagination'. It is not unlikely, Peierls thinks, that 'in the living being, something manifests itself which, in our description of inanimate nature, is left out of account'. No quantum biochemistry or quantum biophysics comparable to the quantum chemistry and quantum physics, which Dr Wassermann commends to us, has so far appeared. N. W. Pirie, to whose biochemical researches Dr Wassermann has appreciatively referred, contented himself with the modest reflection (8, p. 277) that 'a recognition of the uncertainty of our knowledge of large molecules might fertilize biochemistry as much as Heisenberg's principle fertilized physics'. Pirie also warned scientific workers (8, p. 280) that 'the lure of a concept that clarifies another field is strong and

many of us follow it, like the music of the Pied Piper, to our scientific detriment'. Can we be sure that the 'field concept', which seems so indispensable in physics, will not lead us astray in another domain like psychology or parapsychology?

I quite realize that biologists like Spemann, Weiss, Huxley, De Beer and Lehmann have shown that many facts about biological development can be translated into the ready and convenient language of 'gradient-fields'. Analogies with magnetic and other physical fields can be traced, e.g. if a 'field' is cut into two halves, each half forms a complete 'field', perhaps with its original 'polarity', two 'fields' may join to form a single 'field', etc. But such analogies, if they pretend to be *solutions* of the fundamental problems of biology, mislead us. Weiss (12, p. 292) pointed out that the field theory of morphogenesis is '*an abbreviated formulation of what we have observed . . . its analytical and explanatory value, therefore, is nil*'. (Italics not mine.) Spemann summed up his work by remarking that the nearest analogies to developmental processes can be found only in those 'vital processes of which we have the most intimate knowledge, viz. the psychical ones'. Waddington (11, p. 23), in putting us on our guard against current ambiguities of the 'field theory' of morphogenesis (ambiguities centering round 'limb districts', 'individuation fields' and 'regions of competence'), has told us that 'unless the term is given a fairly precise meaning, it is only too easy to use it as a sort of "joker" by which almost anything can be explained'. I do not question Dr Wassermann's very competent knowledge of these and other biological *facts*. But I do question not only the *predictive* (Dr Scriven's comments are appropriate here) but the *analytic* and *explanatory* value of Dr Wassermann's 'field-theoretical' approach to biology.

I have explained elsewhere (3) why I consider that any ambitious 'field-theoretical' treatment of sensation and learning, in the domain of psychology, is exposed to very serious disabilities. As things stand, all attempts to establish quantitative and even qualitative agreement of the theory with the statistical facts, in my opinion, are more or less arbitrary. M. H. Pirenne, who laid the foundations of a quantum-theoretical treatment of visual sensations, has specifically warned us that 'we are under no compulsion to believe that physiology gives us the whole truth about life and ourselves. Physiology can be taken as referring only to certain aspects of reality' (6, p. 58). The 'fundamental problem of body-mind relationship' remains a '*metaphysical* problem'. Elsewhere (7, p. 317) Pirenne has said that 'the laws of physics are inferred from our experience, while our consciousness of freedom is an

immediate experience'. J. S. Wilkie (14), in exploring the implications of 'causation' for biological theory, has observed that 'the physical language lacks the necessary concepts (constructs) under which the peculiar behaviour of mnemonic traces could be subsumed'.

I am afraid I agree with Dr Scriven that Dr Wassermann's proposed explanations of telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition, even in outline, raise more difficulties than they meet. If 'psi fields' interact *very little* with 'matter fields', then, of course, the problem of 'distance' should not worry us in parapsychology. A South Indian radio engineer has invoked the analogy of Pauli's neutrino 'fields'. (See the postscript to my paper 2.) But these *ad hoc assumptions*, in the parapsychological context, are as much in need of explanation and justification as Osty's 'transcendental plans' or Von Hartmann's 'Unconscious'. I regard Dr Wassermann's theory of precognition, even apart from the questionable or more than questionable assumptions about 'duplicating fields', some of which undergo changes more rapidly than the others, as a dangerous simplification of the whole problem. And I think that Dr Wassermann's cavalier dismissal of responsible philosophers like C. D. Broad and H. H. Price, who have stressed the difficulties about 'paranormal cognition' for contemporary theories, is quite unjustified. Modern physics, biology and psychology cannot yet boast of the omniscientist who has a complete and unified theory of *all* the facts. It is a one-sided dogmatism to suppose that all parapsychological questions *can* be, or *should* be, settled by extending the use of familiar scientific constructs. I hold that it is the status of science itself *vis-à-vis* Human Personality which should be debated in parapsychology. I should like to end by expressing again my admiration for Dr Wassermann's knowledge of various interrelated sciences.

C. T. K. CHARI

Department of Philosophy and Psychology,
Christian College, Tambaram,
Madras, S. India.

REFERENCES

- (1) Born, Max, *Physics in my generation* (London and New York : Pergamon Press, 1956).
- (2) Chari, C. T. K., 'Quantum physics and parapsychology,' *J. Parapsychology*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (September 1956), 166-183; postscript to the paper, *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (March 1957), 73.
- (3) —, 'Quantum field theory and "goal-directed" activity,' Parts I and II, *The Journal of Psychological Researches* (The Madras Psychological Society, Madras University, Madras-5, India), Vol. I, No. 1 (January 1957), 8-18; No. 2 (May 1957), 15-38.

- (4) Dyson, F. J., 'Field Theory,' *Scientific American*, 188, No. 4 (April 1952), 57-64.
- (5) Peierls, R. E., *The Laws of Nature* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956).
- (6) Pirenne, M. H., 'Descartes and the body-mind problem,' *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. I (May 1950-February 1951), 43-59.
- (7) —, 'Mind-like behaviour in artefacts and the concept of mind,' *Ibid.*, Vol. II (May 1951-February 1952), 315-317.
- (8) Pirie, N. W., 'Concepts out of context: The Pied Pipers of Science,' *Ibid.*, Vol. II, 269-280.
- (9) Slater, J. C., *Modern Physics* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1955).
- (10) Spemann, H., *Embryonic development and induction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938).
- (11) Waddington, C. H., *Principles of Embryology* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956).
- (12) Weiss, P., *Principles of development* (New York: Henry Holt, 1939).
- (13) Weyl, H., *Philosophy of mathematics and natural science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), Appendix C, 264.
- (14) Wilkie, J. S., 'Causation and explanation in theoretical biology,' *Brit. J. Phil. Sc.*, Vol. II, 290.

SIR,—I should like to question one sentence of Mr L. C. Robertson's interesting article on 'The Logical and Scientific Implications of Precognition' in the Journal for September, 1957. Speaking of the 'specious present', Mr Robertson says: 'This variability of the time-span of consciousness together with its unique feature of being an enduring present in which past, present and future co-exist, albeit only momentarily, carries with it an implication of profound significance to the whole question of precognition, for it means that A may now be perceiving an event which for B is already a memory, and similarly an event still in the future for X may for Y be a present percept or a remembered event.'

Let us take an artificially simple situation in which this will be the case. We shall only need three characters, for B can perform the role Mr Robertson assigns to Y as well as his own. A, B and X are all looking at a pointer which revolves once a second. A's and X's specious presents last one second, B's lasts half a second. X, unlike the others, has slow reflexes and notices things a second after they happen. (The others of course do not have instantaneous reflexes, but they are so quick that for simplicity we can ignore the time they take.) At the instant when the pointer is vertical after completing its tenth revolution in a particular minute, its whole tenth revolution will be 'now' for A, the latter half of the tenth revolution will be 'now' for B and the whole of the ninth

revolution will be 'now' for X. It is then true that A is 'now' perceiving an event (the first half of the tenth revolution) which for B is already a memory, and the same event—a 'present percept' for A and a 'remembered event' for B—is still in the future for X.

This would be perfectly possible on the 'commonsense' view of Time as objective and the same for all observers. It carries no implications of any significance to the question of precognition; the pointer might be going to stop a tenth of a second after completing its tenth revolution without affecting any of the percepts and memories described above. In other words, the variability of the specious present or time-span of consciousness is the variability (in different people or in the same person at different times) of the time taken for a perception or other event in consciousness to fade to the status of a memory, and it does nothing to show that events in consciousness can be caused by even slightly later events.

S. H. FINDLAY

19 Calder Avenue,
Perivale, Middlesex.

REVIEWS

It is hoped to review the following books in a later issue:

- LIVING MAGIC. By Ronald Rose. London, Chatto and Windus, 1957. 222 pp. 18s.
THE THREE FACES OF EVE. By C. H. Thigpen, M.D., and H. M. Cleckley, M.D. London, Secker and Warburg, 1957, 313 pp. 18s.

OBITUARY

MRS CHARLES COOMBE TENNANT

We regret to record the death in 1956 of Mrs Charles Coombe Tennant, who will be better known to Members of the Society, as 'Mrs Willett'. The daughter of Lieut. George Pearce-Serocold, R.N., she married in 1895 Mr Charles Coombe Tennant, of Cadoxton Lodge, Vale of Neath, South Wales, one of whose sisters was Mrs Frederic Myers.

A few months after Myers's death in 1901 she became an Associate of the Society, resigning in 1905. She did not however take an active part in psychical research until after a severe and sudden bereavement in 1908. She then wrote to Mrs Verrall, of whom she knew as an automatist, though their acquaintance was at that time very slight, and she herself began to practise automatic writing. It soon became clear that her scripts were connected with

those of the earlier members of 'the S.P.R. group of automatists'. They were sent for record and analysis to Oliver Lodge, and later to G. W. Balfour, who edited two of the literary puzzles, 'The Statius Case' (*Proc.* XXVII) and 'The Ear of Dionysius' (*Proc.* XXIX), that were a special feature of her automatism. He also contributed to *Proceedings* (Vol. XLIII) an analysis of its psychological aspects.

Mrs Coombe Tennant was a person of manifold interests and wide sympathies. She took a prominent and enthusiastic part in public affairs, especially in all that concerned Wales. During the First War she was a valued member of many local committees. She was Chairman of the Arts and Crafts Section of the National Eisteddfod in 1918, and served for many years as an officer of the Gorsedd of Wales. In 1920 she became the first woman Justice of the Peace to be appointed to the Glamorgan bench. She was a discriminating patron of modern Welsh art, and was proud to number many young Welsh painters among her friends. She also contested a Parliamentary election, and was the first woman to be appointed by the British Government a delegate to the Assembly of the League of Nations in 1922.

THE LIBRARY

THE Library, which was temporarily closed on its removal to 1, Adam and Eve Mews, has now been re-opened for reference and borrowing. From the Index of Authors those cards relating to books which have been disposed of have been removed. Of the remaining volumes, those most likely to be consulted have been placed in the oak bookcases in the new library. For reasons of space some of the bookcases could not be transferred, and for the time being it has been necessary to resort to some double-banking of books in the remaining cases, pending a thorough revision of the Index. The volumes have been arranged in a manner which enables the present whereabouts of a title to be found by reference to the existing press mark, with the help of a list of bookcase numbers and a diagram on view in the Library.

Many foreign books and back numbers of periodicals very seldom consulted are stored in the attic. Volumes marked in the Index as in the attic can be consulted on giving the Secretary twenty-four hours' notice.

Readers returning books to the Library are requested not to replace them on the shelves.